

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK
YELLOWSTONE PARK, WYO.

CE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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MONTHLY REPORT

for

March, 1918.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

YELLOWSTONE PARK, WYO.

OFFICE OF SUPERVISOR

Superintendent.

May 9
April 10, 1918.

The Director,
National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit my report of conditions in the park for the month of March, 1918.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

The Yellowstone National Park was set aside by Act of Congress March 1, 1872, (Secs. 2474 and 2475, R. S., 17 Stat., 32) as a pleasuring-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people, and placed under the exclusive control of the Secretary of the Interior, who was authorized to make such rules and regulations as he deems necessary for the care and management of the park. It is situated principally in northwestern Wyoming, but laps over a little more than two miles into Montana on the north, and almost two miles into Montana and Idaho on the west. Its dimensions are about 62 miles north and south, and about 54 miles east and west, giving an area of about 3,548 square miles, or 2,142,720 acres. Its altitude is 6,000 to 11,000 feet.

The park was governed by civilian superintendents, assisted by a few scouts, from the time it was set aside until August 10, 1886, when, under authority contained in the Sundry Civil Bill approved March 3, 1883, at the request of the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of War detailed troops of United States Cavalry to protect the park, the commanding officer acting as park superintendent under the direct orders of the Secretary of the Interior. On October 16, 1916, by mutual agreement of the heads of the two Departments, the troops were withdrawn from the park, and a civilian supervisor, with a corps of 25 rangers for patrol and protection work, and a few civilian employees necessary for other duties, were appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to replace them. The Sundry Civil Bill, approved June 12, 1917,

(Public No. 21, 65th Congress) contained a clause which made it necessary for the troops to be returned to the park for the purpose of patrolling it, and they were returned on June 26, 1917, relieving the park superintendent of so much of the duties as pertained to "protection."

The maintenance and construction of roads, bridges and improvements in Yellowstone Park, is carried on by special appropriation under the War Department, the work being locally in charge of an officer of the U. S. Engineer Department, known as the District Engineer Officer, who reports directly to the Chief of Engineers, although his orders direct him to report to the Park Superintendent for duty. 278.8 miles of main road and 24.75 miles of secondary road are located in the park, and 106.5 miles of main road are maintained by the same department in the forest reserves adjoining the park on the south and east. Major George E. Verrill, Engineers, U. S. Reserves, is at the present time in charge of improvement work in the park, as District Engineer. A copy of his report for the month of March is appended hereto.

The local office of the U. S. Weather Bureau, Department of Agriculture, is in charge of Mr. G. E. Lawton, Observer.

Park Headquarters for all departments and most of the concessioners, is located at Mammoth Hot Springs. A telephone system connects Headquarters with the sub-stations. A hydro-electric power plant furnishes the light for the buildings and grounds at Headquarters. Water, electric current, and telephone service are furnished other departments of the government in the park, by the National Park Service, without charge. During March the hydro-electric power plant was run daily from 4.00 P. M. until 8.00 A. M., and was continued during the day when any necessity existed.

Funds for purposes of administration of the park, and for the care and maintenance of buffalo and other animals, are obtained from special appropriations by Congress, and from revenues derived from various sources in the park.

CONDITIONS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH.

Generally speaking, the month was unusually warm and beautiful. The mean temperature was 31.9, being 5.4 degrees

warmer than normal for March. The precipitation was 1.89 inches, being 0.29 less than normal. Of this practically all fell in the form of snow, the heaviest fall being 5.2 inches of snow on March 8th. But practically all of the snow, as well as much of the old, melted during the month, leaving only a trace on the ground at the end of March, except for drifts. On the higher altitudes in the park, considerable of the snow melted during the month, leaving a less amount than usual for this time of the year. At the end of the month the road between Mammoth and Gardiner was dry throughout its entire length, including the "slide", and the weather conditions are encouraging for an early spring. The conditions for the wild animals were excellent, and many of the elk that left the park during the winter returned. Bluebirds and robins made their appearance on March 10th, and bears and woodchucks appeared from their winter quarters during the month.

EMPLOYEES.

A total of ²⁷ 21 permanent and ³ 3 temporary employees were carried on the pay roll during the month of March, namely: One chief clerk, (Acting Superintendent) two clerks, one chief scout, nine scouts, one buffalo keeper, one assistant buffalo keeper, two telephone switchboard operators, one lineman, one electrician, one assistant electrician, one laborer, one temporary plumber, one temporary laborer, and one temporary assistant electrician. 1 plumber (11-30) 1-10th

Distribution: Chief Scout Mc Bride continued the feeding of elk, deer, antelope and mountain sheep, between Mammoth Hot Springs and Gardiner, to March 19th, since which they have not required feeding. He was assisted by Scouts Trischman, Lawson, Dewing, and a portion of the time by Scout Pound. After that date they hauled hay for feeding domestic stock, from ranches near Electric, where it had been purchased in stack. Scout Pound also did considerable work in overhauling motor trucks for use in hauling this hay, and repairing wagons, etc. Scout Dewing spent all of his spare time in hunting coyotes. About 109 tons of hay were fed to the wild animals in March, of which 11 tons remained from the winter supply, and the balance was purchased from nearby ranchers. Scout Smith assisted forest rangers in looking after and protecting the elk that were found outside of the park down the Yellowstone Valley. Scout Anderson assisted forest rangers in patrolling the country just north of the park line east from Gardiner, and inside of the park as far as Heliroaring Creek, and also made quite a specialty of hunting coyotes and lions. Scout Lacombe remained on duty in the Tower Falls district during the entire month. Scout Little

patrolled in the vicinity of Headquarters up to March 13th, when he left for an extended trip on snowshoes to Pelican Valley and the Upper Yellowstone, returning to Headquarters April, 8th. Scout Brooks visited the country along the west border of the park from Yellowstone to the northwest corner of the park, March 1st to 23d, traveling on snowshoes, and left again on March 25th for a trip to the south and southwest corners of the park.

The buffalo keeper and his assistant were on duty at the Buffalo Farm on Lamar River. Other employees were on duty at Headquarters, operating and maintaining telephone lines, hydro-electric power plant, buildings, etc., and caring for domestic animals belonging to the Department, which are being wintered on hay.

Leaves of absence: The only leave of absence which was granted during the month was to Scout Peter Lawson, which was an extension of regular annual leave, from the 18th to noon of the 27th; 9½ days, as authorized in your letter of April 3, 1918.

Vacancies: At the close of March 28th there were the following vacancies: 1 assistant electrician at \$1200 per annum; 1 lineman at \$900 per annum, and 1 plumber at \$1200 per annum.

During the month, employees of this office purchased a total of \$470.57 worth of War Saving and Thrift Stamps.

ANIMALS. DOMESTIC.

Such driving, saddle and pack animals as were needed for regular work and feeding game, were kept up and fed hay and grain. Surplus horses were kept on alfalfa hay at Headquarters.

FIRES.

No forest fires occurred during the month. The Gallatin Soldier Station was destroyed by fire on Sunday P. M., March 10th, while occupied by a detachment of one noncommissioned officer and one enlisted man of the U. S. Cavalry stationed in the park. They claimed a defective flue caused the fire, which is probably the cause. The chimney near which it started is built of concrete, and since the fire shows two or three cracks large enough to let sparks escape. This building was built by the War Department in 1910, at a cost of \$5,518.00. The Commanding Officer informed me that he would make a report and ask for funds to rebuild it.

GRAZING.

No domestic stock was grazed in the park during the month of March. Towards the latter part of the month, grass had started at the lower altitudes to an extent to afford considerable good grazing for elk, deer, etc., and the elk that had previously left were returning in large numbers.

FISH.

There was no fishing of any consequence in the park waters during the month. Local people fished occasionally in the lower part of Gardiner River, but catches are usually very small at this season of the year.

IMPROVEMENTS.

No permanent improvements of any consequence were made by any one in the park during the month. The Yellowstone Park Transportation Company had a few mechanics at work in the shops overhauling motor transportation. Regular employees of this office maintained the hydro-electric power plant, the telephone lines, and the water system, and made such slight repairs as were required. Scout Pound, who is an excellent mechanic, spent considerable time overhauling motor transportation, and repairing wagons, but did not complete this work in March and is still engaged on it a portion of his time.

The U. S. Engineer Department did some work in keeping the Gardiner slide open to traffic, and towards the end of March began working on the old road to Gardiner, preparing it for travel in case the slide road becomes impassable. Some repairs were also made on the roads in the vicinity of Fort Yellowstone and between Fort Yellowstone and Gardiner. Report of the District Engineer for the month of March is appended hereto.

MONIES TRANSMITTED.

Report of monies transmitted, collected, due, etc., on the new blank forms, is appended hereto as a part of this report.

NATURAL PHENOMENA.

No changes in the natural phenomena of the park were recorded during the month of March.

VISITORS.

Eight visitors came in at the northern entrance and came as far as Mammoth Hot Springs during the month.

Special visitors were recorded as follows:

Mr. T. E. Keefe, Superintendent of Hotels, March 14th to 16th.

Rev. Vanderbeek, on March 17th, to hold divine services.

Mr. F. M. Dille, representing the U. S. Biological Survey, March 14th to April 5th, capturing blacktail deer for Montana National Bison Range.

Mr. W. S. Berry, Secretary and Manager of the Yellowstone Park Film Company, resident of Gardiner, Montana, took moving pictures of wild animals in the early part of the month.

Births:

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Edward Carleton Holmes on March 1st. Mr. Holmes is an employee of the Yellowstone Park Transportation Company.

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Fred R. Springer on March 11th. Mr. Springer is an employee of the U. S. Engineer Department.

WILD ANIMALS.

All wild animals seen, with few exceptions, were reported in good condition, and as the grass began to appear at the lower altitudes the latter part of the month, and has been increasing in quantity since, there should be but little loss. On March 19th the elk, deer, antelope and mountain sheep had gone back from the feeding grounds, ceased to be interested in the alfalfa hay put out for them, and the feeding was discontinued. Up to that time about 3,500 elk, 350 antelope, and over a hundred deer, had been fed. The mountain sheep stopped coming down to eat hay earlier in the month, and there was no good opportunity to capture them for dipping, but no scab has been noticed among them recently, and it hardly seems advisable to attempt dipping this season.

Elk: Many of those reported outside of the park down the Yellowstone Valley, returned during the latter part of the month, but there are still quite a large number reported outside. Scout

Smith put in all of his time during the month of March with the U. S. Forest Rangers, looking after these elk and protecting them. From February to March, inclusive, remains were found of exactly fifty elk that had been killed outside of the park by poachers, of which 34 were cows, apparently killed for meat, and 16 were bulls, probably killed for the teeth. Reports were received of eight others killed, but no evidence was found on them by our men. Two hundred and fifteen elk were driven back into the park from the vicinity of the Hoppe Ranch, through the gates of the wire fence. About the usual number of elk were seen in the Tower Falls and Soda Butte Districts, and on the north side of the Yellowstone River, east of Gardiner. Scout Little saw 35 on the Upper Yellowstone, and saw signs indicating that about 100 were wintering there. He reported them in excellent condition. On March 14th, Scout Brooks, whom I had sent to Gallatin Station to inquire into the cause of the fire which destroyed the station building, found two dead bull elk about 300 yards from the station, teeth gone, remains of one calf elk on the boundary line of the park west of the station, evidently killed for meat, and the remains of another elk about 300 yards inside of the park, which had been killed so long that no evidence existed as to its kind, manner of death, etc. Except for one of the bulls near the station, the soldiers claimed they did not know that there was any dead elk in the vicinity, and in the case of the bull, no evidence was forthcoming. Seven elk were killed making capture for shipments during the month. Shipments were made during the month as follows:

- 25 in one car by freight on March 18th, under your authority March 8th, (2 males and 23 females) to Elk Run Ranch, Montana.
 - 60 in one car by express on March 20th, (12 males and 48 females) to Arizona, under authority March 8th.
 - 4 (1 male and 3 females) by express, crated, to Mexico, Missouri, March 20th, under authority March 1st. The bull died after reaching his destination, apparently from injuries, although he was in excellent condition when shipped.
- Total shipped during the month,..... 89.

Scout Anderson found five elk killed by lions and coyotes, and one that died from an undetermined cause.

Buffalo: The tame buffalo are in good condition. A 3-year-old cow was drowned on March 8th, in a swamp in the pasture, probably due to being crowded into the snow which was deep in

the swamp by the others. The bones and robes were saved for instructions as to disposition. Scout Little reported seeing 29 of the wild buffalo in Pelican Valley, on March 21st, including 4 calves; that this seemed to be all in that vicinity, but he had good reason to believe the herd had divided, and a part was on Lamar River, and this proved true, and he later (April 5th) reported seeing on Lamar River, but he did not try to find all of them as his rations ran short. If weather conditions are favorable, he will later return to Upper Lamar and try to see the balance of this herd.

Mountain Sheep: Thirteen sheep were frequently seen near Gardiner Canyon, and 34 were seen in the Tower Falls District, all reported in excellent condition with no sign of scab.

Coyotes: Twenty-nine coyotes were reported killed during the month.

Wolves: Signs of the pack on Specimen Ridge were reported, but none were killed.

Mountain Lions: Three mountain lions were killed during the month by Scout Anderson.

PROTECTION AND CARE OF GAME.

The only cases of poaching reported during the month were as stated above, namely 50 elk killed outside of the park, most of them before the forest rangers and scouts took the field to protect the elk that had left the park, and four near Gallatin Station, of which no reasonable explanation was forthcoming, notwithstanding that two of them were close to the soldier station.

ARRESTS AND VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW.

No violations of the law, except as noted in preceding paragraph, were reported, and no arrests were made.

PROPOSED WORK.

Completion of the locational and pictorial index of structures and improvements in the park, as suggested in your letter of June 15, 1917.

Special care of wild and domestic animals, and destruction of carnivorous animals.

✓ Repair and maintenance of telephone lines, water system, and hydro-electric power plant.

✓ Continuation of work of last fall, constructing telephone lines and trails, cultivating land, sanitation, purchase and installation of signs, and marking north and portions of east and west boundary lines.

✓ Referring to the Act of Congress (Public No. 106, 65th Congress) approved March 19, 1918, entitled "An Act To save daylight and to provide standard time for the United States", I have to advise that all timepieces were, on March 31, 1918, advanced one hour.

Very respectfully,

CHESTER A LINDSLEY

Acting Superintendent.

Inclosures:

Report of District Engineer Officer on roads and improvements.

Report of Park Revenues:

Schedules B and D for 1917.

Schedules A, B, C and D, and recapitulation, for March, 1918.